

911 Emergency Communications Districts



Functional Analysis & Records Disposition Authority

**Revision
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Local Government
Records Commission
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of 911 Emergency Communications Districts

Sources of Information

- Representatives of 911 Emergency Communications Districts
- Alabama Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association (ALNENA) Website
- Baldwin County, Blount County, Calhoun County, Colbert County, Covington County, Cullman County, Homewood, Limestone County, and Shelby County Emergency Communications District Websites.
- Records Retention Information for Emergency Communications/Emergency Management
- Records from the States of Florida, Kansas, Missouri, Nevada, New York, and North Carolina
- Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-1-98-1 through 11-98-11 [2004 revision]

Historical Context

The Alabama Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association (ALNENA) entertainingly describes the origins of 911 emergency communications in an article entitled “World’s First 911 Call.” Here, for once, our state was in the forefront; for that call was placed in Alabama.

“Before Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone (June 2, 1875), public safety was served by town criers. A town crier would walk the streets of a town and cry out for help in emergency situations. In the 1950’s, independent telephone companies were very common in the United States. If you wanted the police, you dialed the police station. If you had a fire, you called the fire department. If you needed any emergency help, you dialed the individual you needed, or you could dial “0” and get the operator. Then he or she would ring the persons you were calling for.

“In 1958, Congress called for an [*sic*] universal emergency number. At this time, the President’s Commission of Law Enforcement and the F.C.C. started arguing over a single, easy-to-remember number. This was due to the large volume of emergency calls going to telephone company operators. A person may [have been] calling for emergency help while the operator was giving information on the number of Aunt Betsy in Louisiana or Uncle Charles in Oklahoma, which [led] to delays in emergency responses. Telephone companies were facing the problem of how to separate emergencies from general business. For the next ten years, the idea was discussed and argued about among the different agencies who [*sic*] wanted to receive the calls. Police said they should answer all calls; the Fire Department felt they were the better choice; some even felt the local hospital was the best answer.

“According to a report in the Fayette, Alabama *Times Record*, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the historic event, B.W. Gallagher, President of Alabama Telephone Company, said he was inspired by an article in *The Wall Street Journal*. He read that the president of AT&T and the F.C.C. had announced that 911 would be the nationwide emergency number. Being a bit offended by the fact that the views of the independent telephone industry had been overlooked in this decision, Gallagher decided to make the Alabama Telephone Company the first to implement 911. Gallagher consulted with Robert Fitzgerald, inside plant manager for the Alabama Telephone Company, who examined schematics of the company’s 27 exchanges. Fitzgerald chose Haleyville, because its existing equipment was best suited to be quickly converted to receive 911 calls. Fitzgerald then designed the circuitry and installed the first 911 system in less than a week”

“Haleyville, Alabama introduced the nation’s first 911 system, which was located at the police station. Alabama Speaker of the House Rankin Fite made the first call from another city hall room. It was answered by Congressman Tom Bevill on a bright red telephone located in the police department. Also on hand [were] Haleyville Mayor James Whitt, Public Service Commission President Eugene (Bull) Connor, and B.W. Gallagher. So, on February 16, 1968, the first 911 call was made.” (ALNENA website)¹

Despite this promising beginning, Alabama’s emergency communications network took some years to evolve. The state legislature did not address the issue until 1984. Alabama Act 84-369 (now codified, with its amendments, in Code of Alabama 1975 Title 11 Chapter 98) provided that any county or municipality might create what is now known as an Emergency Communications District (ECD). A district’s purpose was to establish “a public safety answering point (PSAP),” which could “receive telephone calls dialed to the telephone number 911,” and dispatch police, fire, medical, or rescue units to deal with any type of emergency reported. The act also formally established 911 as “the primary emergency telephone number for use in communication districts.”

As noted on ALNENA’s statewide website, “legislation has been and continues to be a headache to almost everyone involved in 911.” The original act left a number of important issues unresolved: “No provision for smaller counties or cities to be part of a multi-jurisdictional communications district... No provision for establishing a common automatic location identification program... No provision for establishing, operating, maintaining, and replacing old emergency communications equipment... [and] ...Lack of uniform ...charges per

¹Six days later, Nome, Alaska became the second U.S. locality to implement 911. By 1976, “911 was serving about 17% of the population of the United States,” and that figure had grown to 50% by 1987. “At the end of the 20th century, nearly 93% of the population [and] 96% of the geographic US” was covered by “some kind of 911 service. Ninety-five percent of that coverage was Enhanced 911.” (Colbert County ECD website)

communications district.” Soon after affiliating with the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) in 1991, Alabama’s 911 officials began to address these problems.

Perhaps the most critical issue was the need for “levelized funding.” Under Alabama Act 84-369, 911 districts were funded “solely by a surcharge on telephone service,” assessed at five percent of the rate charged by the telephone company in the district. The trouble was that different companies charged at different rates, creating confusion and inequity. One district might be served by several companies. Districts with a lower surcharge rate had to provide the same 911 service on less income. Through its legislative committee, ALNENA tried to replace the five-percent assessment with a flat fee. Although that solution failed, the relevant Code section was revised in 1992, 1995, and 2004 to increase the revenue available to ECDs. They were allowed to increase 911 service charges to “five percent of the maximum tariff rate charged by any [telephone] service supplier in the district” and could “receive federal, state, county, or municipal personal property and funds” for additional support. The 2004 amendment mandated adjustment of the tariff rate every five years (beginning in 2010) under supervision by the Public Service Commission. It also extended 911 service to “Voice-Over-Internet Protocol (VoIP) or other similar technology,” as had been done in response to FCC requirements for wireless telephones in 1998. (See Federal Order 94-102, adopted by the FCC in 1996, and the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-98-5 and -5.1.)

The rapidity of technological advances has created other issues of service and funding. For example, last year wireless 911 calls to one ECD amounted to 61% of its call volume yet generated only 18% of its operating revenue. The use of VoIP, complains another district’s website, “is spreading faster than service providers[’] capability to integrate the technology with existing communications infrastructures.” Nevertheless, these and other improvements in 911 service have come through a combination of regulatory and legislative action. In 1990, the Public Service Commission approved ALNENA’s petition (over South Central Bell’s objections) to deregulate the purchase of PSAP equipment, allowing 911 districts to use “providers other than Bellsouth and other operating telephone companies.” Further amendment of the Code enabled “two or more communication districts” to cooperate in “funding and service to their respective areas,” or even to consolidate under a common board. In 1998, the legislature created a funding mechanism² for districts to lease or purchase Enhanced 911 equipment, which pinpoints incoming calls by location and routes them to the appropriate PSAP, where they are verified and responded to by dispatchers.

Thus, in the past two decades, most of Act 84-369’s shortcomings have been successfully resolved. Unfortunately, the time devoted to this effort has meant that “other legislative ideas, such as dispatcher certification and training standards, [had to be] placed on the back burner.”

Agency Organization

²The Commercial Mobile Radio Service Emergency Radio Services Board (see the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-98-6 through 11-98-8).

Any Alabama county or municipality may establish an Emergency Communications District. Most originated in the 1980s and '90s. ALNENA's website lists a total of 82, noting that "all but a couple of counties are covered." Having established a 911 district, the creating authority next appoints "a board of commissioners composed of seven members to govern its affairs." The authority's governing body may, if it chooses, serve as its own board. Appointment and meeting procedures, as well as the qualifications of board members, are set forth in the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-98-4. Like other corporate bodies, a board may acquire or deaccession property, hire and fire employees, enter into contracts or litigation, and receive and disburse funds. It oversees the 911 district's financial operations and "provides policy guidance for communications operations." Its primary duty, however, is to set up one or more Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) "where 911 calls are answered."

Public Safety Answering Points "may be located at a Police Department, Sheriff's Office, Fire Department, or at a consolidated PSAP that serves an entire [district]." "Every 911 system is unique to the area which it serves," so PSAPs vary considerably in size, staffing, and technological sophistication. Nevertheless, their basic *modus operandi* is essentially the same. Incoming 911 calls are taken by a dispatcher, who obtains the caller's name and location, the method of communication (landline, wireless telephone, etc.), and the nature of the emergency. If the PSAP is equipped with Enhanced 911 (which includes Automatic Number Identification [ANI], Automatic Location Information [ALI], and a Geographic Information System [GIS]), the call's location is acquired automatically and – for landline telephones – displayed on a computer monitor. "Cell phone" technology is less precise, so callers may need to confirm their location verbally. Even while the 911 call is proceeding, information is being routed to a second dispatcher, who sends the appropriate response unit for the type of emergency reported. Enhanced 911 therefore speeds up response time dramatically. The few PSAPs still equipped with only "Basic 911" lack computerized assistance in locating calls. Dispatchers communicate verbally with callers and emergency response units, using standard telephone lines.

Typically, PSAPs are organized into administrative, operations, mapping/GIS, and training/public education sections. Staff resources – unsurprisingly – are concentrated in the call center (operations); typically, about two-thirds of a PSAP's employees are telecommunicators or their supervisors. The remaining staff includes addressing clerks, GIS coordinators and technicians, network administrators, training officers, administrative assistants, and the 911 center's director. Because PSAPs are essentially organized by function, their activities will be treated more fully in the sub-functional analysis.

Agency Function and Subfunctions

The mandated function of the 911 Emergency Communications Districts in Alabama is to dispatch emergency assistance agencies (such as fire and emergency medical response units) As such, they are agencies responsible for performing the Law Enforcement and Emergency Powers function of Alabama government as described in the "Functional Analysis of Alabama Government."

In the performance of their mandated function, the 911 Emergency Communications Districts may engage in the following subfunctions:

- **Promulgating and Planning.** This subfunction covers all planning, policy-making, and administrative activities of the district's board, except those covered under "Administering Internal Operations." Besides creating and operating its PSAP(s), the board provides financial oversight and is responsible for selecting "the method [of emergency response] ... most feasible for the county or municipality." It may also, in its policy-making role, contract with "public or private safety agencies" for emergency response or "make grants to smaller municipalities for dispatching equipment and services." (See the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-98-4, 11-98-11.)
- **Responding to 911 Calls and Dispatching Emergency Assistance.** PSAPs operate call centers with a number of answering positions, at which telecommunicators (working in shifts around the clock) answer 911 calls and dispatch emergency assistance. Besides employing telephones and computer-aided dispatch systems, telecommunicators monitor and communicate on public safety radio channels. Usually, a PSAP maintains contact with all police, fire, and emergency medical services in its district – often amounting to dozens of agencies – although some PSAPs transfer calls for law enforcement agencies rather than dispatching aid directly. The volume of calls handled by PSAPs can be tremendous: one took 10,589 emergency calls in May 2006 alone.
- **Mapping and Addressing.** 911 districts may create maps of the county, often utilizing a GIS system. Maps are networked to dispatchers' answering positions to assist them in locating resident, business, or wireless callers. Districts may make CD copies of maps available to public safety agencies or utilities and permit citizens to purchase paper copies. To keep its system current, the mapping/GIS staff collects and updates address information in the district on a routine basis. The GIS section may also be responsible for approving new or altered road names and issuing addresses in new subdivisions.
- **Training and Certifying Staff.** Due to the critical nature of 911 assistance, and the variety of skills that it requires, staff training appears in this RDA as a separate subfunction. For ECDs, training goes far beyond the level contemplated under "Managing Human Resources." Initial instruction of new employees can require 100 hours of class work and three to six months of on-the-job oversight. Dispatchers serve a probationary period before they are allowed to work unsupervised; afterward, they attend periodic refresher courses. The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) and the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center (ACJIC) offer certification in, respectively, telecommunications and the national criminal information network. Many ECDs also require staff to be certified Emergency Medical Dispatchers (EMDs), trained in CPR, controlling bleeding, and general first aid. Other courses that may be offered include disaster planning; rape counseling; stress management; and dealing with callers who are deaf, blind, or speech- or mobility-impaired. A full-time language interpretation service is available to assist 911 dispatchers in communicating with callers who do not speak English.
- **Educating the Public.** Educating the community is an important facet of emergency preparedness and response. "Children," as one website notes, "need to learn at an early

age how to get help in an emergency.” Many 911 districts offer classroom training at local schools and day care centers, including 911 call simulations and “coloring books, clowns, and other educational ideas.” Staff may speak to “Civic Clubs & Organizations, Elderly Adult Groups, Church Groups, Homeowner’s Associations and Volunteer Firefighters and their families.” 911 instruction is often free of charge; some districts even offer “special gifts for the children.” They may also invite local groups to tour the 911 center.

- **Coordinating with Other Emergency Management Agencies.** This subfunction relates to preparing and implementing emergency response in time of natural disaster, terrorist attack, or other crises. 911 districts cooperate in this effort with other federal, state, and local authorities, such as FEMA, the Alabama Emergency Management Agency, and local EMAs; the federal and state Departments of Homeland Security; and local police, fire, and emergency medical agencies. In keeping with their overall mission, the role of ECDs in emergency management is primarily one of collecting and disseminating information. ALNENA’s website, and those of many local 911 districts, provide links to FEMA and Alabama’s emergency management and Homeland Security departments. One south Alabama ECD’s website has a special “September 11, 2001” page. More relevantly to its location, the site also offers a great deal of “Hurricane Information,” including preparedness tips, evacuation routes, and links to other emergency assistance agencies.
- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of the 911 Emergency Communications Districts’ work includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support the programmatic areas of the agency including:

Managing the Agency: Activities include internal office management activities common to most government agencies such as corresponding and communicating, scheduling, meeting, documenting policy and procedures, reporting, litigating, legislating (drafting, tracking), publicizing and providing information, managing records, and managing information systems and technology.

Managing Finances: Activities include budgeting (preparing and reviewing budget package, submitting the budget package to the Department of Finance, documenting amendments and performance of the budget); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency’s budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; and assisting in the audit process.

Managing Human Resources: Activities include recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill positions within the agency; providing compensation to employees; providing benefits to employees such as leave, health insurance, unemployment compensation, worker’s compensation, injury compensation, retirement, and death benefits; supervising employees by evaluating performance, granting leave, and

monitoring the accumulation of leave; training and providing continuing education for employees; investigating and disciplining.

Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources: Activities include inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing security for property managed by the agency; insuring property; and assigning, inspecting and maintaining agency property.

Records Appraisal of 911 Emergency Communications Districts

The following is a discussion of the three major categories of records created and/or maintained by the 911 Emergency Communications Districts: Temporary Records, Permanent Records, and Records No Longer Created.

Temporary Records

Temporary records should be held for what is considered their active life and be disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. Some of the temporary records created by the board are discussed below:

- **911 Dispatch or Incident Data Files.** These records document all incoming calls on 911 telephone lines, emergency radio systems, or computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems, as well as the dispatching of law enforcement, fire, or emergency medical service units in response. Information available in the files includes the call's time and location, name of the dispatcher receiving the call, and type of emergency response unit dispatched. These records, which are usually computerized, perform the same function as 911 Dispatch Cards or Log Books. "Primary documentation" (the record copy) is therefore assigned the same retention period (3 years), while duplicate copies, or "original call [computer] data" that has been transferred to "hard copy" may be deleted after 3 months, in order to not exhaust available computer memory.
- **Aerial Photographs and Final Maps.** These records, produced by the 911 district's GIS system, provide a photographic record of its service area's physical characteristics. They may include aerial views and maps of streets, roads, bridges, bodies of water, and other structures and topography. Although similar records have been appraised as permanent for other jurisdictions (notably county commissions), they are scheduled here as temporary because the 911 district is usually not the agency responsible for the GIS system. Moreover, only current aerial photographs and maps have operational value for purposes of emergency response. The proposed retention periods are the same as for the records listed below.
- **911 Service Area Master Address Files.** These records include geographic information on all residential and business addresses in the 911 service area, primarily street and road names, locations, and telephone numbers. Because they do not provide detailed infor-

mation on individual residents or businesses, they have no significant historical interest or utility beyond the agency. Master address information is maintained in a perpetual data file. The proposed disposition (one year after supersession) protects the long-term integrity of the database while permitting the short-term retention of outdated information.

Permanent Records

The Archives Division recommends the following records as permanent:

Promulgating and Planning

- **Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.** These records document meetings of the district board. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings. Meeting minutes and related records provide essential documentation of policy formulation by the 911 district's executive authority.
- **911 District Development Records.** These records document the 911 district's creation and development, as well as the establishment of policies governing its operations. Records appraised for permanent retention include feasibility studies for establishing a district; implementation reports; and any resolutions, correspondence, or related documents regarding its creation.

Responding to 911 Calls and Dispatching Emergency Assistance

Permanent documentation of this subfunction is found in the 911 district's annual report and in permanent financial records such as annual budgets, annual financial reports, and audit reports. In addition, computer-aided dispatch systems operated by most PSAPs essentially provide a permanent database to document this function, even though individual records in the database are appraised as temporary.

Mapping and Addressing

- **Road/Street Naming and Name Changing Policy Files.** These records document standards employed by the 911 district in establishing and changing road/street names and address ranges. They are appraised as permanent on the same basis as other Administrative Policies and Procedures.

Training and Certifying Staff

- **Training Records – Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications.** These records document the 911 district's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy

statements or guidelines, training manuals, or other publications. Like other administrative policies and procedures, they are appraised as permanent. Documentation of 911 districts' training standards may also be needed to demonstrate that employees received adequate training in responding to particular emergencies.

- **Certification Records – Certification standards, policies, and procedures.** These records document the process of 911 employee certification. They pertain to employees deemed qualified for certain positions after in-house training and/or certification by ACJIC, APCO, or other certifying agencies. Other records may document employee certification as EMDs or in CPR, counseling, or other job-related skills. Records appraised as permanent include standards and procedures adopted by the 911 district in determining certification requirements for its employees, which may rely upon standards created by other certifying agencies. Permanent retention is justified on the same basis as for other administrative policies and procedures.

Educating the Public

- **Educational Program Administrative Files – Planning documentation.** These records document the 911 district's educational programs for various constituencies in its community, such as schools, church or civic groups, homeowners' associations, etc. Planning documentation for such programs is appraised as permanent, as a policy-related record.

Coordinating with Other Emergency Management Agencies

- **Emergency Management or Disaster Recovery Plans – Superseded area-wide disaster plans.** These records document emergency procedures for restoring government operations and protecting vital records in case of natural disaster, terrorist attack, or other emergency. Information in the plan may include: lists of vital records and equipment, locations of back-up record copies and emergency supplies, contact numbers for emergency assistance agencies, names and telephone numbers of disaster recovery team members; and disaster response and recovery procedures. Because 911 districts' primary function is to communicate emergency information and coordinate emergency response, they play a critical role in disaster recovery. A disaster plan is an essential component of emergency management. However, to avoid confusion or an outdated response to an altered situation, only the most current plan should be retained. Copies of the plan should be dispersed offsite among members of the disaster recovery team. Superseded area-wide disaster plans are appraised here as permanent, primarily for their historical interest in documenting what plan was in effect should a major emergency occur.
- **Local Emergency Planning Committee Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.** 911 district staff may cooperate in emergency planning with representatives from other local emergency management agencies. Minutes of the emergency planning committee, like other minutes, are appraised as permanent. However, they will remain permanent records in the 911 districts' RDA only until an RDA is completed for local Emergency

Management Agencies (EMAs), as this agency bears the primary responsibility for local emergency planning.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

- **Administrative Policies and Procedures.** These records document policies and procedures established by the 911 district or its board on a variety of issues regarding its relations with the public, other governmental or private entities, and employees. They provide primary documentation of the district's fulfillment of its statutory mandate.
- **911 District Annual Reports.** Annual reports provide primary documentation of 911 operations on an annual basis. They may include information on organization and staffing, numbers of employees and their annual accomplishments, evaluations of the district's response to emergency calls and to its other mandated activities, and statistical data.
- **Websites.** 911 districts develop websites for transmitting public safety or emergency preparedness/response information to the public, as well as publicizing their own activities and services. Material on the site may provide information on the 911 district's organization, services, and history; instructions on how to make a 911 call; general information on emergency preparedness and response; and links to other public safety agencies. If information on websites is periodically captured and retained, they offer ongoing documentation of the ways in which agencies interpret their own mission and project their public role.
- **Administrative Correspondence.** This correspondence documents the formulation of policy or rule-making decisions by the board, director, and other 911 staff. It provides primary documentation of policy development and implementation in the 911 district's fulfillment of its mandated responsibilities.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

- **Budgeting Records – Approved annual budgets/Annual financial reports.** These records document projected versus actual revenues and expenditures in each program area during a fiscal year. Therefore, they have evidentiary and historical value in tracking the 911 district's emergency management plans, priorities, and accomplishments over time.
- **Audit Reports.** Audit reports document the 911 district's overall financial condition, and the findings of its independent auditor, during each audit period. They are an important means of providing fiscal accountability to the public over time. These records include information on the district's accounting procedures, bookkeeping problems, compliance with state and federal regulations, and record-keeping practices.
- **Grant Project Final Narrative Reports.** 911 districts may be the recipient of federal grants. Most documentation associated with these grants is short-term accounting material. The final narrative report, however, summarizes the goals of the grant, how the

money was used, and what was accomplished. They therefore have permanent evidentiary value in documenting what are often one-time programs.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

- **Employee Handbooks.** Employee handbooks provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other agency policies and procedures. They may serve as evidence of compliance with state and federal hiring practices and may be used in personnel-related litigation.
- **Employee Newsletters.** Employee newsletters document an agency's employment policies, employee programs and benefits, and information on individual employees. Along with employee handbooks, they provide primary documentation of human resources management.
- **Job Classification and Pay Plans.** These records document the various job classifications used by the 911 district. They include the qualifications, duties, and pay range for each position. As the most complete record of agency job classifications, they provide a profile of its services to the public over time.
- **"Drug Free Workplace" Records.** These records document agency substance abuse policies and training, as well as drug and alcohol testing of employees. Under the federal Americans With Disabilities Act, such medical-related records may not be included in employee personnel files. The proposed disposition is generally based on 49 CFR Ch. VI 655.71 (10-1-05 edition). Under federal requirements, training records, testing records, and medical information (drug treatment referrals) are all short-term. However, policies and procedures on drug and alcohol abuse are scheduled here as permanent, like other policy-related records.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

- **Building Construction and Renovation Files – plans, specifications, and blueprints.** These files document the design, construction, repair, and renovation of the 911 district's buildings and facilities. Appraised for permanent retention are plans, specifications, and blueprints of the 911 center, which offer the primary historical documentation required. The proposed disposition allows their transfer to a local library, archives, or other historical repository.

Permanent Records List

911 Emergency Communications Districts

Promulgating and Planning

1. Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets
2. 911 District Development Records – feasibility and implementation reports and studies/resolutions, correspondence, etc., relating to 911 district's creation

Mapping and Addressing

1. Road/Street Naming and Name Changing Policy Files

Training and Certifying Staff

1. Training Records – training standards, policies, procedures, and publications
2. Certification Records – certification standards, policies, and procedures

Educating the Public

1. Educational Program Administrative Files – planning documentation

Coordinating with Other Emergency Management Agencies

1. Emergency Management or Disaster Recovery Plans – superseded area-wide disaster plans
2. Local Emergency Planning Committee Minutes, Agendas, and Packets

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

1. Administrative Policies and Procedures
2. 911 District Annual Reports
3. Websites
4. Administrative Correspondence

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

1. Budgeting Records – Approved annual budgets/Annual financial reports
2. Audit Reports
3. Grant Project Final Narrative Reports

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

1. Employee Handbooks
2. Employee Newsletters

3. Job Classification and Pay Plans
4. “Drug-Free Workplace” Records – policy and procedure documentation

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

1. Building Construction and Renovation Files – plans, specifications, and blueprints

911 Emergency Communications Districts Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the Local Government Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-5 and 41-13-22 through 24. It was compiled by the Archives Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the Commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of the 911 Emergency Communications Districts. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the Agency in carrying out their mandated functions and activities. It establishes minimum retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the Agency to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successor in office and may be made available to members of the public. Records also must be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the agency records manager or ADAH Archives Division at (334) 242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

The RDA shall govern the disposition of all records, regardless of format, created by the agency from creation to dissolution. Please contact the staff of the Department of Archives and History before destroying any records created prior to 1940.

This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules or RDAs governing the retention of the records created by the Agency. Copies of superseded schedules are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.

The RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.

Certain other record-like materials are not actually regarded as official records and may be disposed of under this RDA. Such materials include (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; (2) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document agency activities; (3) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete; (4) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes, may include, but are not limited to, telephone call-back messages, drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value,

copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business, and internal communications about social activities; (5) honorary materials, plaques, awards, presentations, certificates, and gifts received or maintained by the agency staff. They may be disposed of without documentation of destruction.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the Agency and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained as a result of activities and transactions performed in carrying out these subfunctions. The Agency may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the Local Government Records Commission for consideration at its regular biannual meetings.

Promulgating and Planning

1.01 Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets. These records document meetings of the 911 districts board. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings. Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

1.02 Hearing Files. These records are case files documenting hearings held by the board on any subject that falls within its purview, such as personnel actions or citizen complaints. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

1.03 Recordings of Meetings. Audio or video recordings provide a verbatim account of meetings of the board. They are normally used only as an aid to preparation of the minutes. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until minutes are approved.

1.04 911 District Development Records. These records document the creation and development of the 911 emergency communication district, as well as the establishment of policies governing its operations. Disposition is as follows:

- a. **Feasibility and Implementation Reports and Studies.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
- b. **Original resolutions, correspondence, etc., relating to the 911 district's creation.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
- c. **Background Materials.** Used in preparing feasibility and implementation reports and studies, preliminary maps, and detailed statistical and other supplementary data accompanying reports and studies.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after completion of project.

Responding to 911 Calls and Dispatching Emergency Assistance

2.01 Activity Reports.

- a. **Annual or quarterly activity reports.** These reports document 911 dispatch activities on an annual or quarterly basis. They take the form of statistical summaries for each category of emergency call received, type of response unit dispatch, etc. Information from these records may be included or summarized in the district's annual report (7.03).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.
- b. **Daily and monthly activity reports.** These records documents daily and monthly dispatching activities by individual 911 district personnel. They provide statistical summaries of the kinds of calls received, emergency units dispatch, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

2.02 911 Dispatch or Incident Data Files. These records document all incoming calls on 911 telephone lines, emergency radio systems, or computer aided dispatch (CAD) systems, as well as the dispatching of law enforcement, fire, or emergency medical service units in response. Information available includes calls time and location, name of the dispatcher receiving call, and type of emergency response unit dispatched.

- a. **Primary documentation:** original call data or "hard copy" format (printout, tape, CD) maintained as record copy
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.
- b. **Secondary documentation:** duplicate copies or original call data that has been transferred to "hard copy" format (printout, tape, CD) maintained as record copy
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 months.

2.03 911 Dispatch Cards or Log Books. These records, kept as cards or log books, document the reception of all 911 emergency calls and the dispatching law enforcement, fire, or emergency medical service units to provide assistance.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after last entry.

2.04 911 Communication Records. These records provide a verbatim account of 911 calls, text messages, and other communications to PSAP dispatchers and the dispatcher's response. They also include recordings of communications between dispatchers and law enforcement, fire, or emergency medical personnel in the field.

- a. **Recorded information that does not become part of a case file.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months.
- b. **Recorded information that becomes part of a case file.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until final disposition of all cases for which recording provides evidence.

Mapping and Addressing

3.01 Aerial Photographs and Final Maps. These records provide a photographic of the 911 service area's physical characteristics. They may include aerial views and maps of streets, roads, bridges, bodies of water, and other structures of topography.

- a. **Information in GIS system maintained by 911 district.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after information has been superseded.
- b. **Information in GIS system not maintained by 911 district.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

3.02 Geographic Information System (GIS) Records Used in 911 Dispatch Operations.

These records may include street, road right-of-way, road centerline, hydrant, tax parcel, or other data maintained or updated by dispatching unit. Disposition is as follows:

- a. **Information in GIS system maintained by 911 district.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after information has been superseded.
- b. **Information in GIS system not maintained by 911 district.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

3.03 Road/Street Naming and Name Changing Policy Files. These records document standards employed by the 911 district in establishing and changing road/street names and address ranges.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

3.04 911 Service Area Master Address Files. These records include geographic information on all residential and business addresses in the 911 service area, primarily street and road names, locations, and telephone numbers. They may be created and maintained as electronic files saved to disk, tape, and diskette; in hard-copy output such as printed maps, or in both formats.

Disposition: Temporary record. Retain 1 year after information has been superseded.

3.05 Address Change Information. These records are used to update address information in the 911 service area master file. They include additions or corrections of names, street address, telephone numbers, or other information on area residences or businesses, as well as alternatives road or street names.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after master file has been updated and verified.

3.06 Automatic Number Information (ANI) and Automatic Location Information (ALI) Records. These records may include an ALI database; ANI and ALI reports, such as printouts or screen displays; and ALI discrepancy reports submitted by 911 or telephone utility staff.

- a. **ALI discrepancy reports.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months after discrepancy is resolved.

b. **All other records.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

3.07 Telephone Utility Address Records. These records may include copies of databases or printouts received from the local telephone utility, as well as updates, corrections, and trouble reports.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

3.08 Transitory Road/Street-Related Information. These records contain information on roads and streets within 911 districts that has only transitory value, such as information on temporary road or street closings.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months.

Training and Certifying Staff

4.01 Training Records. These records document 911 district's provision of in-service training and professional development for its employees. They do not include materials obtained from outside sources. Disposition is as follows:

- a. **Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications.** These records document the 911 district's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general statements or guidelines, training manuals, or related publications.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Permanent retention applies to the file copy. Duplicates may be destroyed when no longer needed.

- b. **Training administrative files.** These records document the process of conducting training for employees. They may include individual lesson plans, audiovisual presentations or materials, lists of attendees at workshops or training sessions, sign-in sheets, unpublished handouts, and appraisals of training completed by participants.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

4.02 Certification Records. These records document the process of 911 employee certification. They pertain to employees deemed qualified for certain positions after in house training and/or certification by ACJIC, APCO, or other certifying agencies. Other records may document employee certification as EMDs or in CPR, counseling, or other job-related skills.

- a. **Certification standards, policies, and procedures.** These records document standards and procedures adopted by the 911 district in determining certification requirements for its employees.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- b. **Employment registers.** These records are lists of individuals declared qualified for certain positions. They include the job classification, names of eligible applicants, and their ranking on the list.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after superseded.
- c. **Employee certification files.** These records document certification process for individual job applicants. They may include statements of eligibility records, grades, notifications, and related correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Educating the Public

5.01 Educational Program Administrative Files. These records document community education programs conducted by the 911 district for various constituencies, such as schools, church or civic groups, homeowners' associations, etc.

- a. **Planning documentation.** These record overall plans for public educational and training programs or emergency simulations, etc.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.
- b. **Teaching materials and administrative files.** These records may include informational publications about 911 activities and services, individual lesson plans, handouts and disposable educational materials for classroom instruction (such as coloring books or toys for children), lists of attendees at educational programs, appraisals of training or presentations completed by participants, and related correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Note: Financial records pertaining to educational activities are covered, with other financial records, in Section 7 of the RDA. Sign-in sheets and logs of visitors to the 911 center are covered under the record series Facilities/Buildings Security Records.

Coordinating with other Emergency Management Agencies

Note: Retention requirements for these records will be revised upon completion of a records disposition authority (RDA) for Emergency Management Agencies (EMAs).

6.01 Emergency Management or Disaster Recovery Plans. These records document emergency procedures for restoring government operations and protecting vital records in case of natural disaster, terrorist attack, or other emergency. Information in the plan may include: lists of vital records and equipment, locations of back-up record copies and emergency supplies, contact numbers for emergency assistance agencies, names and telephone number of disaster recovery team members; and disaster response and recovery procedures.

- a. **Current area-wide disaster plan.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Note: Duplicate the current plan and disperse off-site copies among the disaster recovery team members.

b. Superseded area-wide disaster plans.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Superseded plans may be placed in a local library, archives, or similar repository when no longer useful, under the terms of a local records deposit agreement.

c. 911 district's agency disaster plan.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Note: Duplicate the current plan and disperse off-site copies among the disaster recovery team members.

6.02 Local Emergency Planning Committee Minutes, Agendas, and Packets. These records document emergency planning within the 911 staff may participate with representatives from other emergency management agencies.

a. If 911 district is designated as the official record-keeping agency*.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. If another emergency management agency is designated as the official record-keeping agency.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Note: Upon completion of their RDA, local Emergency Management Agencies (EMAs) will be designated as the official record-keeping agency for these records.

6.03 Records of Emergency Warning or Training Exercises. These records, which may include reports, audiovisual materials, statistics, and related correspondence, document the conduct of emergency warning or training exercises within the 911 staff may participate with staff of other emergency management agencies.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

7.01 Administrative Policies and Procedures. These records document policies and procedures established by the 911 district or its board on a variety of issues regarding its relations with the public, other governmental or private entities, and employees.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

7.02 Administrative Reference Files. These records include materials not created by the 911 district; they are collected and used only as reference sources of information.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

7.03 911 District Annual Reports. These records summarize 911 operations on an annual basis. They include information on organization and staffing numbers of employees and their annual accomplishments, evaluations of the district's response to emergency calls, and statistical data. Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

7.04 Historical and Publicity Files. These records include news releases, newsletters, brochures, periodicals, photographs, videotapes, audiotapes, speeches, and public service announcements created by 911 staff. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

7.05 Websites. 911 districts develop web sites for transmitting public safety or emergency preparedness/response information to the public, as well as publicizing their own activities and services. Material on the site may provide information on the 911 district's organization, services, and history; instructions on how to make a 911 call; general information on emergency preparedness and response; and links to other public safety agencies. Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Preserve a complete copy of the website annually, or as often as significant changes are made.

7.06 Administrative Correspondence. This correspondence documents the formulation of policy or rule-making decisions by the board, director, and other 911 staff. Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

7.07 Routine Correspondence. This type of correspondence documents the daily conduct of the 911 district's affairs in its relations with the public and other governmental or public safety agencies. It relates to everyday matters (such as answering inquiries, providing information, or performing services) rather than to policy development or issues of long-term administrative impact. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

7.08 Legal Case Files. These records document lawsuits filed by or against the 911 district. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the case is closed.

7.09 Complaint Files/Unmitigated Claims for Damages. These records document damage claims against the district that are resolved without litigation. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after settlement or denial of complaint or claim (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-47-23).

7.10 Mailing Lists. These records include various standard lists of names and addresses used by district personnel. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

7.11 Mail, Telephone, and Fax Machine Logs (non-emergency calls). These records are lists of non-emergency mail, telephone and fax machine contacts and related data. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

7.12 Calendars. These records include desk calendars and other scheduling devices for agency personnel.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

7.13 Records Management Documentation.

- a. **Records documenting implementation of the 911 district's approved RDA.** These records include records management plans, records inventories, finding aids, and destruction notices.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- b. **Copy of approved RDA.** The RDA provides legal guidelines for the disposition of 911 district records. The agency records officer should maintain a signed copy of the RDA and distribute copies to other staff as needed.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the RDA was superseded.

- c. **Local government records deposit agreements.** These records are formal agreements executed by an agency so that a local records repository (library, archives, or historical society) may accept physical custody of long-term records. They include inventories of records in the repository.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after termination of the agreement.

Note: Deposit agreements must be approved by the Local Government Records Commission. For information, contact the ADAH.)

7.14 Computer/GIS Systems Documentation. These files include hardware and software manuals and diskettes, warranties, and Y2K records.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain former system documentation 2 years after the audit period in which the former hardware and software no longer exists anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to the new system.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

8.01 Budgeting Records. These records document preparing a budget request package and reporting the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance.

- a. **Departmental budget estimates and requests.** These records contain information submitted by 911 district departments during budget preparation.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- b. **Approved annual budgets.** These records are final annual budgets approved by the 911 district board.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. If a copy of the report is included with the minutes, retain additional copies for useful life.

- c. **Records documenting budget performance during the budget cycle (budgeted and actual revenue reports, investment reports, expenditure reports, encumbrance reports, etc.).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

- d. **Annual financial reports.** At the end of the fiscal year, a summary financial statement may be included in minutes of the 911 district board.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. If a copy of the report is included with the minutes, retain additional copies for useful life.

8.02 Audit Reports. These records document the 911 district's overall financial condition, and the findings of its intendent auditor during each audit period.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

8.03 Accounting Records.

- a. **Routine accounting records.** These are records of original entry or other routine accounting transactions, including journals, registers, ledgers, receipts, invoices for services, bank statements, deposit slips, canceled checks, and other supporting documentation.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Disposition for grant-related accounting records is provided under RDA item 8.07.

Records management recommendation: It is recommended that returned checks, or other records documenting the agency's efforts to collect unpaid fees or service charges, be retained for 5 years or until the settlement of all claims due. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-35, sets 5 years as the statute of limitations for collecting "amounts claimed for licenses, franchise taxes, or other taxes".

- b. **General ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances.** These are records of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting revenue (taxing and licensing), purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the record was created.

8.04 Purchasing Records. These records document the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods and services, and authorizing payment for products. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, purchase orders, invoices, purchasing card receipts, and receiving reports.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Disposition for grant-related purchasing records is provided under Grant Project Files.

8.05 Contracts, Leases, Franchises, and Agreements. These records document the negotiation, fulfillment, and termination of all contracts, leases, franchises, and agreements entered into by the 911 district, including final contracts that are subject to the bid process.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after expiration of the contract (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-33).

8.06 Records of Formal Bids. These records document the bid process, including the municipality's requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses from service vendors.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the date bids were opened (Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-62).

8.07 Grant Project Files. These records document the 911 district's application for and conduct of grant projects funded by local, state, federal, or private sources. Disposition is as follows:

- a. **Financial reports, interim narrative reports, and correspondence.** These records include financial reports, interim narrative reports, background materials, and other non-financial supporting documentation for grants awarded. Also included are records relating to unsuccessful grant applicants.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application.

- b. **Subsidiary financial records.** These records include accounting or purchasing records and other subsidiary financial documentation of grants, excluding financial reports. (See federal Rule 1354.)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission of final financial report.

- c. **Final narrative report.** Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

8.08 Travel Records. These records document requests by agency personnel for authorization to travel on official business, and related materials such as travel reimbursement, forms and itineraries.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

8.09 Employer Tax Returns and Related Files. These records include, but are not limited to, employer state tax returns, federal tax returns, local tax returns, unemployment quarterly reports, and Federal Forms 1099. These records do not pertain to individual employees but instead describe the local government agency as a whole.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

9.01 Employee Handbooks. These records provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other policies and procedures.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

9.02 Employee Newsletters. These records are internal newsletters created for 911 district employees to communicate personnel policies, news of important events, and information on individual employees.

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

9.03 Job Classification and Pay Plans. These records document the various job classifications used by the 911 district. They include the qualifications, duties, and pay range for each position.

Note: The required retention depends on whether the 911 emergency communication district handles personnel administration, or if this falls under a county or municipal personnel department.

- a. **Original job classifications and pay plans generated and maintained by the 911 district.**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- b. **Copies of job classifications and pay plans if originals are held by a county or municipal personnel department.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after position is reclassified.

9.04 Examination Records. These records document the development of and administration of examinations for employment in agency positions.

- a. **Examination history files.** These files document the development of employment examinations. They include questionnaires comparison studies, final copies of examinations, and job announcements.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after examination is no longer in use.

- b. **Examination administrative files.** These records document the administration of examinations to applicants for agency positions. They include rating forms, answer sheets, and lists of applicants.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

9.05 Job Recruitment Materials. These records document efforts by the municipality to advertise positions and attract qualified personnel.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.

9.06 Employment Applications. These records document applications by individuals for employment.

- a. **Successful applications.**
Disposition: Temporary Record Retain in employee personnel file.
- b. **Unsuccessful applications (received in response to specific job announcements).**
Disposition: Temporary record. Retain 3 years.
- c. **Supplemental data forms.** Information on these forms includes the job applicant's name Social Security number, date of birth, race, gender, and recruitment source. The form may be separated and filed separately from other information on the employment application.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after employee separation or 3 years after an unsuccessful application.
- d. **I-9 forms.** These federal forms are used to verify that persons seeking employment are eligible to work in the United States. Disposition of the employing agency's copy is provided by 8 CFR 274a.2.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after employment or 1 year after termination, whichever is longer.

9.07 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Files. These records document the agency's compliance with hiring regulations established by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Note: "Whenever a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought by the Attorney General – [retain] until final disposition of the charge or action" (29 CFR 1602.31, 1602.20).

9.08 Employee Personnel Files. These records document each employee's work history; they are generally maintained as case files. a file may include information on an employee's training, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, promotions and emotions, awards, leave, and salary.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

9.09 Employee Work Schedules. These records document the daily and weekly work schedules of all employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

9.10 Leave and Attendance Records. These records document the attendance and leave status of 911 personnel, both generally and for individual employees.

- a. **Individual employee leave and attendance records (including time sheets).** These are records documenting hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken by individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- b. **Employee cumulative leave/attendance records.** These records document the final leave status (cumulative leave) of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years following audit.
- c. **Employee sick leave donation records.** These records document the donation of sick leave to their colleagues by employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

9.11 Payroll Records. These records document agency payrolls, as well as pay status and payroll deductions for individual employees.

- a. **Annual payroll earnings reports/records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes (wage and tax statements).** These are summaries of employees' earnings during a fiscal year, including all deductions and federal Form 941.
Disposition: Temporary record. Retain 50 years after the end of the tax year in which the records were created.
- b. **Records documenting agency payrolls.** These records include pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers, payroll check registers, payroll action forms, payroll/overtime certification reports, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- c. **Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations.** These records document payroll deductions for taxes (including W-4 forms), retirement and insurance contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.
- d. **Records documenting payroll deductions.** These records documenting taxes (including W-2 forms), retirement contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.
- e. **Employee "Cafeteria Plan" (Flexible Benefits) Records.** These records document salary-reduction type plans authorized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Section 125.
 - i. General information about the plan.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

- ii. Employee applications, correspondence, enrollment cards and files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of the plan.

9.12 Employee Insurance Program Enrollment and Claims Files. These files document the agency's efforts to assist employees and their dependents to enroll in health or life insurance programs, in accordance with established guidelines.

- a. **General information on the program.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.
- b. **Employee applications, correspondence, and enrollment cards and files.**
Disposition: Temporary Records. Retain 4 years after program termination or employee separation.
- c. **Employee claims files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the claim was filed.

9.13 "Drug-Free Workplace" Records. These records document agency substance abuse policies and programs, as well as drug and alcohol testing of agency employees. Under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, such medical related records may not be included in Employee Personnel Files. They are generally governed by the requirements of 49 CFR Ch. VI 655.71 (10-1-05 edition). The types of records to be maintained include:

Training Records (drug and alcohol abuse policy statements, names of employees attending training, documentation of training provided to supervisors on detecting and dealing with employee drug abuse)

Records related to the collection process (collection logbooks; documentation of random, pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, or post-accident testing; documentation of employees' inability to provide testable urine samples for medical reasons.)

Records related to drug testing (test results, custody and control forms, and documentation of employees' refusal to submit to testing or employee challenges to test results)

Records related to employees' referral to substance abuse recovery programs (referrals by professionals, documentation of program completion, follow-up testing of employees)

Retention periods for "Drug-Free Workplace" records are as follows:

- a. **Drug/alcohol policy and procedures documentation.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

- b. **Positive employee drug or alcohol test results, documentation of employee referrals and treatment in substance abuse programs, copies of agency's annual MIS reports submitted to FTA.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

- c. **Records related to the collection process and employee training.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.

- d. **Negative employee drug or alcohol test results.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

9.14 Workmen's Compensation Insurance Claim Files. These files document all claims pertaining to work-related injuries or diseases made by agency employees. (See the Code of Alabama 1975 § 25-5-4.)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years and after the end of the fiscal year in which the transaction occurred.

9.15 Unemployment Compensation Files. These files provide documentation related to employee claims for unemployment compensation.

Disposition: Temporary Records. Retain 2 years following audit.

9.16 Employee Assistance Program Files. These are administrative records documenting the referral of employees to various assistance programs and subsequent services provided.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

9.17 Affordable Care Act Compliance Files. These records encompass the documentation submitted to the federal government to demonstrate compliance with the Affordable Care Act.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission.

9.18 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Records. These records document administration of the federal Family Medical Leave program, including leave taken, premium payments, employer notices, and correspondence.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

9.19 Reports of Employees Required to File Statements of Economic Interest. These records include reports to the Alabama Ethics Commission, and related transmittal letters, copies of statements, and correspondence, pertaining to the filing of Statements of Economic Interest by agency employees. The reports contain the names of employees who are required to file Statements of Economic Interest.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

10.01 Building Construction and Renovation Files. These files document the design, construction, repair, and renovation of the 911 district's buildings and facilities. Included may be building specifications and floor plans, plans of proposed work, list of materials, correspondence, memoranda, reports, blueprints, site plans, elevation details, and financial records. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Plans, specifications, and blueprints.**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office for life of building; agency may then offer for transfer to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.

b. **All other records.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of building.

c. **Records of rented buildings or facilities.**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain during use of building or facility and transfer to new occupant.

10.02 Annual Inventory Records. These records document all personal property, equipment, or capital outlay by the 911 district on an annual basis.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

10.03 Receipts of Responsibility for Property. These records document the temporary use or possession of 911 district property by employees.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return item to property manager.

10.04 Deeds to Property. These are copies of records that document the 911 district's ownership of real property. Deeds are held permanently by the county probate office. Disposition:

Temporary Record. Retain until property is sold. Verify that the county probate office holds the original deed prior to destruction.

10.05 Insurance Policies and Claims.

a. **Insurance policies.** These policies document all insurance policies carried by the 911 emergency communication district on its equipment or property.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the policy was terminated.

b. **Insurance claims.** These records document insurance claims filed by the 911 emergency communication district.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the claim was settled.

- c. **Certificates of liability.** These records provide proof of insurance. Certificates are typically valid for a period of one year or less.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

10.06 Facilities/Buildings Maintenance Work Orders. These records document routine maintenance activities in agency buildings and facilities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

10.07 Facilities/Buildings Inspection Records. These records document routine safety and maintenance inspection of buildings, facilities, and such potentially dangerous item as furnaces, elevators, electronic doors, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

10.08 Facilities/Buildings Security Records (including visitor logs). These records document the 911 district's efforts to provide security to members of the public using its buildings and facilities, as well as to monitor the admission of visitors to these areas. They may include sign-in sheets for visitors, alarm system log sheets, and records documenting security staff's responses to alarms or emergencies.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

10.09 Facilities/Buildings Safety Plans and Training Files.

- a. **Safety plans.** These records document the manner in which agency staff are directed to respond in emergencies. Examples of safety plans include, but are not limited to, fire evacuation protocols, severe weather plans, and active shooter protocols.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.
- b. **Training files.** These records document the training and practice undertaken by staff to implement safety plans. Examples of training and practice include, but are not limited to, fire drills, tornado drills, and bomb threat drills.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

10.09 Motor Pool Use Records. These records document the use of vehicles in the motor pool by 911 employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

10.10 Parking Records. These records document the use of agency parking facilities by employees or visitors. They may include parking permits, cards, and applications for these items.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

10.11 Vehicle and Equipment Ownership and Maintenance Files. These records document the ownership and maintenance of all vehicles and other equipment owned or maintained by the 911 district. They may include titles, bills of sale, repair records and related correspondence.

a. **Ownership records (titles, bills of sale, etc.).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which equipment or vehicle is removed from inventory.

b. **Maintenance files (work orders, repair records, and related financial records).**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

10.12 Long-Distance Telephone Logs. These records document use of the 911 district's long-distance telephone systems by employees during business hours.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority (RDA)

Requirement

Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-23, “no county, municipal, or other local government official, shall cause any. . . record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining the approval of the local government records commission.” This RDA constitutes authorization by the Local Government Records Commission to dispose of records as stipulated, with the condition that the responsible official must submit a Local Government Records Destruction Notice to the ADAH Government Records Division to document the destruction. The ADAH, which serves as the commission’s staff, retains local records destruction documentation as a permanent record.

Recommendations

In addition, the Agency should make every effort to establish and maintain a quality record-keeping program by conducting the following activities:

The Agency should designate a staff member in a managerial position as its records liaison/records manager, who is responsible for: ensuring the development of quality record keeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the agency, coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, ensuring that permanent records held on alternative storage media (such as microforms and digital imaging systems) are maintained in compliance with national and state standards, and ensuring the regular implementation of the agency’s approved RDA.

Permanent records in the Agency’s custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.

Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis—for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA’s provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the Open Meetings Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.

The agency should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the agency chooses to maintain permanent records solely in electronic format, it is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure the records’ permanent preservation and accessibility.

Electronic mail contains permanent, temporary, or transitory record information. Although e-mail records can be printed out, filed, and retained according to the RDA’s requirements, the office should preferably employ an electronic records management system capable of sorting e-

mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.

The staff of the Local Government Records Commission or the Examiners of Public Accounts may examine the condition of the permanent records maintained in the custody of the Agency and inspect records destruction documentation. Agency records managers and/or the ADAH archivists are available to instruct the staff in RDA implementation and otherwise assist the Agency in implementing its records management program.

The Local Government Records Commission adopted this revised Records Disposition Authority on October 28, 2020.

Steve Murray, Chairman
Local Government Records Commission

Date

By signing below, the agency acknowledges receipt of the retention periods and requirements established by the records disposition authority.

Director
911 Emergency Communications District

Date

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